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Garcia, McManus and Toy Introduce Operation Adopt-A-Family Operation will provide community resource information to the families of troops

MICHIGAN - As the nation begins a war with Iraq, Senators Valde Garcia, Michelle McManus and Laura Toy today introduced Operation Adopt-A-Family to provide families of military personnel who have been deployed information on financial, emotional and spiritual support available in Michigan communities.

"As a member of Michigan's National Guard, my wife and I know first-hand what it is like to receive orders for deployment," Garcia, R-Howell, said. "Operation Adopt-A-Family has been designed to help our military personnel focus on protecting the United States while Michigan focuses on the needs of their families."

The operation will provide help for families in three ways, linked together by encouraging local organizations to "adopt" families who may need assistance:

- Local organizations will be enlisted to help families in their search to alleviate hardships directly resulting from the deployment of their spouses or parents.
- Partnerships will be formed between the local organizations and public service groups within communities to maintain an "adoptive" relationship with the families of Michigan's deployed military personnel.
- Support will be generated from the general public and the Legislature to provide funding for the Family Support Network.

"Operation Adopt-A-Family will provide quick access to community resources for the families of those who have been deployed," McManus, R-Lake Leelanau, said. "The program will help link families to local organizations that have programs to fit the needs of these families."

Organizations who want to participate may contact their state legislators to learn about requests for assistance in their neighborhoods.

"The nation is being called on once again to show our patriotism," Toy, R-Livonia, said. "We must pull together and help support the families of our troops in our communities. Let's make sure that everyone has the resources they need while awaiting the return of their loved ones."

The following is a list of participating organizations and their contact information:

Organizations	Phone Number	Internet Address
Michigan Bankers Association	(517) 485-3600	
Michigan Sheriffs Association	(800) 875-5500	www.michigansheriff.com
American Legion	(800) 504-4098	
Veterans of Foreign Wars		www.bu.mvcc.com/vfwmi
Catholic Social Services		www.css-svh.org
Salvation Army	(517) 484-4424	
Michigan Family Forum		www.fatherhood.org
Michigan Works!	(800) 285-WORKS	www.michiganworks.org
Holy Spirit Catholic Church	(810) 231-9199	
Cornerstone Evangelical Presbyterian Church		
Michigan National Guard Family Support	(517) 702-5116	
Michigan Association of School Boards		www.masb.org

Additional information on the Operation Adopt-A-Family program is available by contacting the office of Senators Garcia, McManus and Toy.

Note: Audio comments from Senators Garcia, McManus and Toy will be available after 5:00 p.m. on the Michigan Senate Hotline at (517) 373-4000, or online at the Michigan Senate Republican Audiowire at

http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire/.

Photographs of the press conference will also be available after 5:00 pm on the Michigan Senate Photowire at <a href="http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire">http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire</a>/.